

WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR?

1. Opposed the "blight" declaration before the Central Planning Board and the City Council:
 - a) 1,000 persons attended public hearing June, 1961.
 - b) 32 speakers opposed the "blight" declaration.
 - c) 3400 petitions filed in protest.
2. Supported seven residents who filed suit last December in Superior Court asking that the "blight" declaration be lifted:
 - a) The case was heard in June, 1962.
 - b) The "blight" declaration had been delayed an important 10 months during the case, and no properties could be condemned or demolished while the legal fight was going on.
 - c) Last August the Court ruled that the "blight" declaration was valid.
3. We are now considering an appeal of the Court decision:
 - a) Lawyers are examining the decision to see whether an appeal is justified.
 - b) A fund raising drive to cover legal expenses is going on.
4. We hired a planning consultant to look over the area and analyze the light industrial project:
 - a) He issued a report called "Industrial Potential in Clinton Hill" last June.
 - b) The Report was publicized in the press and at a public meeting.
 - c) The Report sells for \$1.50, which goes to cover costs. Copies are still available.
 - d) The Report was presented to the Mayor and the City Council and was mailed to other official city, state, and federal agencies.
 - e) The consultant found our area basically unsuited to large-scale light industrial re-use and urged rehabilitation and new community facilities be undertaken.
5. We met with Mayor Addonizio to discuss the project:
 - a) We asked the Mayor for rehabilitation of good housing and careful, gradual clearance for new, varied housing, with suitable relocation of site tenants into better quarters.
 - b) We asked that the City keep up its efforts in the area through one-side of the street parking, brighter street lights, clean sewers, pruned trees, and repair of damaged streets - a general program of re-attention to the area.
 - c) We assured the mayor of our 100% cooperation.
 - d) The Mayor was sympathetic but could make no promises in detail. He agreed to come to a public meeting in the area to speak to the people.
6. We are now raising funds:
 - a) We would like to develop an alternate plan for the area instead of the light industry project.
 - b) We want it drawn up by outside experts, paid by us, with fullest participation by the people who live and work in the area.
 - c) We have written to federal officials and agencies asking for full citizen participation by the site residents and businessmen in any planning that is done.

NEWARK NOTEBOOK

Clinton Hill fighting uphill 'blight' battle

By RICHARD O. SHAFER

Urban renewal is an awesome phrase that to most people means things like the new Colonnade Park apartment homes or the Prudential's group of glistening white marble buildings on Broad St.

But it has a far deeper significance and, apart from professional city planners, the residents of Newark's Clinton Hill section probably are more aware of the real meaning of urban renewal than anyone. Where others have merely been reading and hearing about it, the folks who live on the Hill have been living and practicing it for years.

To them, urban renewal means things like neighbors keeping their hedges and lawns trimmed, painting their fences, cleaning up litter in the block, making newcomers to the neighborhood welcome, tuning radios and TVs low—the hundred and one things that spell the difference between good neighbors and bad and that also lead to a cleaner, healthier and safer neighborhood.

Someone once defined Sunday in America as a day when you wished you were dead and in heaven and your neighbors were dead and in hell. But, after seven years of promoting their neighborhood, the people of Clinton Hill would dispute that.

But being good neighbors is only one of the aims of Clinton Hill residents, especially in recent months. Right now, they're fighting for the preservation of the area for residential purposes. Actually, they're testing the axiom that you can't beat City Hall, on the theory that while an axiom is something that everyone believes, it isn't necessarily true.

A 76-block section of Clinton Hill has been declared

blighted by the City Council and is scheduled to be razed and made ready as sites for light industries.

The people of Clinton Hill have been fighting a losing battle up to now to prevent it on the grounds that the area is not blighted and that 17,000 people would lose their homes if the program goes through. They have gone to court to block it and are anxiously awaiting a decision in their Superior Court suit. The suit challenges the method the city used in determining the question of blight.

Behind all the civic enterprise in Clinton Hill are a number of people, among them a 37-year-old history professor named Stanley B. Winters, who with his wife, Helen, a nursery school teacher, owns his own home at 26 Shanley Ave.

In 1954, four years after moving to Newark from New York, Winters attended a workshop on group relations at the West Side adult school, where he learned something about the changing Newark and neighborhood problems.

FORMED COUNCIL

"That's how I got interested," he says. "Some of us decided to go to work in our own backyard."

The catalyst of that decision was the formation in 1956 of what is now the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council by about 25 residents who felt that the neighborhood itself must take the initiative in solving its problems.

From that beginning, branches have been formed in more than a score of blocks. Meetings are held in people's homes, with coffee and cake as refreshments. Neighbors gather and talk about their mutual problems, none of which is too small to tackle.

More's the Winters once described the Council's activities:

"Primarily, the Council functions to bring city dwellers together to work for common ends. This is remarkable only if one is cognizant of the provincialism and insouciance that eroded city life after engenders, feelings which tend to alienate men from each other.

"The Council provides a meeting ground for persons of diverse backgrounds and interests. Catholics, Jew, Protestant and unchurched mingle and express strong views on many questions. Whites and Negroes jointly beset crowded school classes.

DEVELOPS STRENGTH

"The banker and the merchant discuss off-street parking with the factory worker. Teachers, civil servants and domestic workers mutually evaluate the adequacy of playgrounds. The Council represents a vertical and horizontal cross-section of the community. This diversity gives it strength, enabling it to mobilize the total community."



Shafer

